

Christmas in a Dugout

By
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"First Call," Etc.

Mr. Empey's Experiences During His Seventeen Months in the First Line Trenches of the British Army in France

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It was Christmas eve, and cold; not the kind of cold which sends the red blood tingling through your veins and makes you want to be "up and at 'em," but that miserable damp kind that eats into the marrow of your bones, attacking you from the rear and sending cold shivers up and down your spinal column. It gives you a feeling of dread and loneliness.

The three of us, "Curly," "Happy," and myself, were standing at the corner of "Yankee avenue" and "Yiddish street," waiting for the word "Stand to," upon which we were to mount our machine gun on the parapet and go on watch for two hours with our heads sticking over the top.

"Yankee avenue" was the name of the fire trench, while "Yiddish street" was the communication trench leading to the rear. We were occupying "Y" sector of the front line of our brigade. The trench was muddy, and in some places a thin crust of ice was beginning to form around the edges of the puddles.

We had wrapped our feet and legs with empty sand bags, and looked like snow shovellers on Fifth avenue. My teeth were chattering with the cold. Happy was slapping his hands on his thighs, while Curly had unbuckled one of the buttons on his overcoat, and with his left hand was desperately trying to reach under his right armpit—no doubt a "cootie" had gone marketing for its Christmas dinner.

Then came the unwelcome "Stand to," and it was up on the freestep for us, to get our gun mounted. This took about five minutes.

Curly, while working away, was muttering: "Blime me, Christmas eve, and here I am somewhere in France, 'alf starved like the cold."

Happy was humming "Keep the Home Fires Burning." Right then, to me, any kind of a home fire would have been very welcome.

It was black as pitch in No Man's land. Curly stopped muttering to himself and Happy's humming ceased. There was serious work in front of us. For two hours we had to try and penetrate that blackness with our straining eyes to see that Fritz did not surprise us with some Christmas stunt of his.

Suddenly, Happy, who was standing on the freestep next to me, gripped my arm, and in a low, excited whisper, asked:

"Did you see that out in front, Yank, a little to the right of that black patch in the barbed wire?"

Turning my eyes in the direction indicated, with my heart pounding against my ribs, I waited for something to develop.

Sure enough, I could make out a slight movement. Happy must have seen it at the same time, because he carefully eased his rifle over the top, ready for instant use. My rifle was already in position. Curly was fumbling with the flare pistol. Suddenly, "dop!" as he pulled the trigger, and a red streak shot up into the air as the starburst described an arc out in front; it hit the ground and burst, throwing out a white, ghostly light. A frightened "meow," and a cat, with speed clutch open, darted from the wire in front of us, jumped over our gun and disappeared into the blackness of the trench. Curly ducked his head, and Happy let out a weak, squeaky laugh. I was frozen stiff with fear. Pretty soon the pump action of my heart was resumed, and once more I looked out into No Man's land.

For the remainder of our two hours on guard nothing happened. Then we "turned over" to the second relief and, half frozen, wended our way through the icy mud to the entrance of our dugout.

From the depths of the earth came the notes of a harmonica playing "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag, and Smile, Smile, Smile." Stumbling down the muddy steps we entered the dugout. About eight boys of our section, sitting on their packs, had formed a circle around a wooden box. In an old ammunition tin six candles were burning. I inwardly shuddered at this extravagance, but suddenly remembered that it was Christmas eve. "Sailor Bill" was making cocoa over the flames of a "Tommy's" cooker, while "Key" Honney was toasting bread in front of a trench fire bucket, the fumes from which nearly choked us.

As soon as we made our appearance in the dugout the circle stood up, and, as is usual with the English, made room for us to get around the fire bucket to thaw out our stiffened joints. In about twenty minutes or so the cold of the trench was forgotten and we joined in the merriment. The musician put his harmonica away, and, bursting with importance, Sailor Bill addressed us:

"Gentlemen, it is now time for this

ship's company to report progress as to what they have done for the Christmas feed which is to be held tomorrow at eight bells. Yank, let's hear yours."

I reported one dozen eggs, two bottles of white wine, one bottle of red wine, eight packets of Gold Flake "fags" (cigarettes), and one quart bottle of champagne, which had cost me five francs at a French estaminet.

This report was received with a cheer. "Key" Honney was next in order. He proudly stated that he had saved his rum issue for the last eleven days, and consequently was able to dole out to the feast his water bottle three-fourths full of rum. This would help out in making brandy sauce for the plum pudding. Sailor Bill informed that he had a fruit cake, a bottle of pickled walnuts, and two tins of deviled ham which had been sent out to him from London. Each man had something to report. I carefully made a list of the articles opposite the name of the person donating them, and turned the list over to Bill, who was to act as cook on the following day.

Just then Lance Corporal Hall came into the dugout, and warming his hands over the fire bucket, said:

"If you blokes want to hear something that will take you home to Blighty, come up into the fire trench a minute."

None of us moved. That fire bucket was too comfortable. After much coaxing Sailor Bill, Key Honney and myself followed Hall out of the dugout and up into the fire trench. A dead silence reigned, and we started to return. Hall blocked our way, and whispered:

"Just a minute, boys, and listen."

Pretty soon, from the darkness out in front, we heard the strains of a German cornet playing "It's a Long, Long Trail We're Winding." We stood entranced till the last note died out. After about a four or five-minute wait the strains of "The Swanne River" were wafted across No Man's Land toward us. I felt lonely and homesick.

Out of the darkness from the fire bay on our left a Welsh voice started singing "It's a Long, Long Trail." It was beautiful. The German cornet player must have heard it, because he picked up the tune and accompanied the singer on his cornet. I had never heard anything so beautiful in my life before. The music from the German trench suddenly ceased, and in the air overhead came the sharp crack! crack! of machine gun bullets, as some Boche gunner butted in on the concert. We ducked and returned to our dugout.

The men were all tired out, and soon rasping snores could be heard from under the cover of blankets and overcoats.

The next day was Christmas, and we eagerly awaited the mail, which was to be brought up by the ration party at noon.

Not a shot or shell had been fired all morning. The sun had come out and, although the trenches were slippery with mud, still it was warm, and we felt the Christmas spirit running through our veins. We all turned in and cleaned up the dugout. Making reflectors out of ammunition tins, sticking them into the walls of the dugout, we placed a lighted candle on each, the rays from which turned night into day.

Bill was hustling about preparing the Christmas spread. He placed a waterproof sheet on the floor, and adding three blankets he spread another waterproof sheet over the top for a table cloth, and arranged the men's packs around the edges for chairs.

Presently the welcome voice of our sergeant came from the entrance of the dugout:

"Come on, me lads, lend a hand with the mail."

There was a mad rush for the entrance. In a couple of minutes or so the boys returned, staggering under a load of parcels. As each name was read off, a parcel would be thrown over to the expectant Tommy. My heart was beating with eagerness as



"Did You See That Out in Front, Yank?"

the sergeant picked up each parcel; then a pang of disappointment as the name was read off.

Each man in the dugout received from one to four parcels. There was still one left. I could feel their eyes sympathizing with me.

Sailor Bill whispered something to the sergeant that I could not get. The sergeant turned to me and said:

"Why, blime me, Yank, I must be goin' balmy. I left your parcel up in the trench. I'll be right back."

He returned in a few minutes with a large parcel addressed to me. I eagerly took the parcel and looked for the post mark. It was from London. Another pang of disappointment passed through me. I knew no one in London.

Then it all flashed over me in an instant. About two weeks before I had noticed a collection being taken up in the section and at the time thought it very strange that I was not asked to donate. The boys had all chipped in to make sure that I would not be forgotten on Christmas. They eagerly crowded around me as I opened the parcel. It contained nearly everything under the sun, including some American cigarettes.

A man named Smith in our section had been detailed as "runner" to our captain and was not present at the distribution of the mail. Three parcels and five letters were placed on his pack so he would receive them on his return to the dugout.

In about ten minutes a man came from the trench loaded down with small oblong boxes. Each Tommy, including myself, received one. They were presents from the queen of England, and each box contained a small plum pudding, cigarettes, a couple of cigars, matches and chocolates. Every soldier in the British army received one of these boxes on Christmas day.

At last Sailor Bill announced that Christmas dinner was ready and we lost no time in getting to our respective packs, sitting around in a circle. Smith was the only absentee, and his parcels and letters, still unopened, were on his pack. He was now a half hour overdue.

Sailor Bill, noting our eagerness to begin, held up his hand and said:

"Now boys, we're all shipmates together. Don't you think it would be



I Eagerly Took the Parcel.

better to wait a few minutes more for Smith?"

We all assented, but in our hearts we were cursing him for his delay.

Ten minutes passed—fifteen—then twenty. All eyes were turned in Sailor Bill's direction. He answered our looks with:

"Go to it, boys, we can't wait for Smith. I don't know what's keeping him, but you know his name is in orders for leave and perhaps he is so tickled that he's going to see his wife and three little nipplers in Blighty, that he's lost his bearings and has run aground."

We started in and waxed merry for a few minutes. Then there would be an uncomfortable pause and all eyes would be turned in the direction of the vacant place.

Uneasiness seemed to prevail. Suddenly the entrance to the dugout was darkened and a form came stumbling down. With one accord we all shouted:

"Come on, Smith, you're missing one of the best Christmas dinners of your life."

Our sergeant entered the dugout. One look at his face was enough. We knew he was the bearer of ill tidings.

With tears in his eyes and a catch in his voice, he asked:

"Which is Smith's pack?" We all solemnly nodded our heads in the direction of the vacant place. Without a word the sergeant picked up the letters, parcels and pack and started to leave the dugout.

Sailor Bill could stand it no longer, and just as the sergeant was about to leave he asked:

"Out with it, sergeant, what's happened?"

The sergeant turned around, and in a choking voice, said:

"Boys, Smith's gone west. Some bloody German sniper got him through the napper as he was passing that barbed-in part in Yiddish street."

Sailor Bill ejaculated:

"Poor old Smith! Gone west!" Then he paused and sobbed out: "My God, think of his wife and three little nipplers waiting in Blighty for him to come home for the Christmas holidays."

I believe that right at that moment a solemn vow of vengeance registered itself in every heart around that festive circle.

MINES AND MINING

Following an idleness for some two months or more, the Florence has resumed operations and if the present plans mapped out do not miscarry the mill will run to capacity with three shifts continuously. Superintendent A. P. O'Brien stated that there was every likelihood that the mill would be run steadily for an indefinite period, as much ore had been secured for treatment at the plant.

Announcement is made that the directors of the Judge Mining & Smelting company will distribute a dividend of 12 1/2 cents per share on the 300,000 shares of outstanding stock. This calls for a payment of \$37,500, and brings the total paid up by the Park City property this year to \$240,000, and the grand total of the company's dividends up to \$8,130,000.

Drilling operations on the Western Allies Oil & Gas company's well in Moab valley were resumed this week, following a week's suspension of work due to a delay in the arrival of some casing. Sufficient casing was received to enable work to proceed uninterrupted until a further quantity arrives.

S. P. Worthington of Oakley, Idaho, president of the Southern Confederate Mining company, with holdings near Clifton in the Deep Creek district, was in Salt Lake after a trip to the property. Mr. Worthington said that he regarded the Southern Confederate property as the most flattering prospect in the Deep Creek country, adding that he based his conclusions upon existing developments and the results already attained.

It is reported from Stockton that E. Shambelin, a lessee on the old Calumet & Hecla property, has made a good strike on the 500-foot level. Mr. Shambelin was working for Messrs. Lynch & Travis, who took a lease on the property nearly two years ago, had been drifting east on the 500-foot level and then quit work, says the Tooele Bulletin. He was then given a lease on that part of the mine by Messrs. Lynch & Travis. He took out several cars of ore, but they were only low-grade, however, averaging about 2 per cent lead and six ounces silver. He is now opening up one which runs about forty-five ounces silver and 40 per cent lead. He has driven a 6-foot hole for 25 feet into the ore with the above values and isn't through the ore yet.

From Tampico comes information that the reports of the oil companies operating in Mexico show that shipments through the ports of Tampico, Tuxpan and Port Lobos in October aggregated 5,834,952 barrels of crude, refined and distilled products, a new high record. All of this oil was exported except a small amount that was shipped coastwise to Puerto, Mexico.

The shipping record for October was as follows: Mexican Petroleum company, 1,511,249 barrels; Penn-Mex. Fuel company, 1,040,040; Mexican Eagle company, 963,270; Cortez Oil company (Port Lobos Petroleum company), 419,436; East Coast Oil company, 373,165; Freeport & Mexican, 358,403; Standard Oil, 334,273; Mexican Gulf, 262,422; Island Oil & Transport, 191,224; Pierce Navigation, 161,648; Texas company, 133,278; National Petroleum, 56,441.

Alta's little ore railway pulled its last load of the season into Wasatch Saturday night. It consisted of about half a dozen ore cars, carrying forty-five tons of ore from the South Hecla mine. It is expected to place the three Shay engines in the roundhouse until the spring opens, probably in April. All depends on the weather. During the winter the rolling stock and equipment will be thoroughly overhauled and repaired, and new acquisitions will be made. It is expected to make the summer of 1919 one of large tonnage and probably some profits for the company.

Many appeals for government relief are reaching the senate mines committee from western producers of chrome, manganese and tungsten, who say that in response to the government's appeal they invested large amounts of money to increase the production and now find themselves unable to dispose of their stocks. Senator Henderson of Nevada, chairman of the committee, said today most of the appeals had come from smaller producers who declare that unless some relief is provided many failures will result.

Reports from the Eureka Bulletin are that there is some improvement in the north drift on the \$25-foot level. A few months ago a strong north-south fissure was cut on this level. The crosscut was continued to the east, where a second and parallel fissure was struck. Here a drift is now making to the north, where the mineralization is said to be strengthening and greater depth is being attained. These reports braced up the stock yesterday.

Shipments of ore from the Prince Consolidated Piche mine to the Utah smelter the past week totaled forty carloads.

Eastern directors of the Nipissing Mines company yesterday declared the usual quarterly dividend of 5 per cent and an extra dividend of 5 per cent, payable January 29 to stock of record December 31, says a J. A. Hogle & Co. wire.

Stockholders of the Hope Mines Development company are in receipt of a statement up to October 31, 1918, showing total assets of \$23,747.56 and profits of \$20,978.50. The report is signed by President T. W. Whiteley, Treasurer C. W. Johnson and Secretary F. O. Horn.

UTAH STATE NEWS

Bishop Hans G. Johnson, son-in-law of Senator W. S. Hansen, died at East Garland Saturday of pneumonia.

Former Governor Spry presided at the opening session of the conference of governors, this week, at Annapolis, Maryland.

John Lee, probably one of the best known cowmen in the southwest and hero of one of Zane Gray's novels, was found dead in his cabin at Red Lake, San Juan county, influenza being responsible for his death.

A delegation of leading French scholars from Paris was royally entertained Saturday in Salt Lake by Dr. John A. Whitson, president of the University of Utah.

As a reminder to those who pledged themselves to buy war savings stamps this month, 9000 postal cards were mailed to citizens of Weber county. The county committee is taking extreme care to send out the notices before publishing the names of those who failed to keep their pledges.

Leut. Orville Wainese Ruby, son of W. W. and Eleanor Ruby, 808 Twenty-second street, Ogden, died Saturday as a result of an aviation accident at Rockwell field, San Diego, Cal., according to a telegram received by his parents from Colonel Burwell, commandant of the aviation school.

The legal fraternity of Ogden has been roused by the judgment handed down by Judge A. W. Agee in the district court in the Jensen-Ryan liquor case. The court ordered that the liquor, 515 pints, should be destroyed, the bottles sold, the automobile in which the liquor was found offered at public auction and the proceeds of the two sales forfeited to the state.

Proudly, yet with tear-dimmed eyes, Mrs. M. B. Crow, mother of Private Raymond Crow, marine corps, the first Utah boy to fall in the great war, watched the first gold star on the field of snowy white satin of the War Mothers' state service flag Saturday in the flag room at the Hotel Utah, Salt Lake City.

The Rocky Mountain club of New York through its secretary, Herbert Wall, in a telegram to Governor Bamberg Saturday, requests Utah's financial help in the entertainment of soldiers from Utah who may be in New York on Christmas day.

Employees of the Utah Copper company have, so far, purchased more than \$250,000 worth of baby bonds and thrift stamps, according to word received by James W. Collins, state chairman of the war savings committee, from Dwight Matier, chairman of the local war savings committee at Magna.

One of the activities in connection with the work of the reconstruction hospital at Fort Douglas will be the publication by the patients of a live hospital newspaper, according to plans that are now under way.

The commercial economy board of Utah, formed early in February, with W. F. Jensen of Salt Lake as commissioner and E. C. Schmidt of Salt Lake and W. E. Zuppan of Ogden as deputies, will go out of existence at the end of the year. At that time all regulations which have been promulgated by the board will also end and those who were affected by the regulations of the board will be free to do as they choose.

Utah's naval fighters who were in the service during the great world war are destined to have some wonderful times when they return home, according to plans which have been outlined by some of the "jackies" who have already returned from the service. It is the plan of the bluejackets in Salt Lake to form a club, and it is desired to have every Utah who enlisted in the navy as a member of the organization.

Every mother in Utah whose boy answered the call to the colors will receive a questionnaire issued by Secretary Arch Thurman of the state council of defense through all various county committees. With the questionnaire will be sent a return envelope addressed to the state war historian at the capitol. The queries concern the name of the fighting man, his home address and overseas address, the date and place of birth, education, occupation or profession before entering service, name of employer and address, home status, whether married or single, and if married the name of wife and number and names of children.

A new industry in Utah, intended to have a large part in reconstruction activities to come now that the war is ended, was launched last week when the attorney for the Utah Flax Products company filed with the secretary of state incorporation papers for that concern.

Apostle A. W. Ivins of the Latter-day Saints church has left for points in northern Mexico, where he will assist in straightening out business entanglements between the Mormon colonists and the Paloma Land & Cattle company.

At a luncheon at the Commercial club at Salt Lake the Salt Lake real estate board went on record as favoring for Salt Lake a charter from the state legislature under which it may govern itself without interference by the legislature.

Alexander Wilson, pioneer mining man of Colorado and Utah, died at his home in Salt Lake last week. Mr. Wilson's death was caused by a paralytic stroke. Mr. Wilson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1859, and came to the United States in his early childhood.

For Christmas Gifts

It isn't necessary to know any other Jewellery Store.

BOYD PARK
MAKERS OF JEWELRY
106 MAIN STREET SALT LAKE CITY

BARGAINS IN USED CARS

10 splendid used cars—Buicks, Oldsmobiles, etc.—\$125 to \$300. Guaranteed five year running condition—very terms if wanted by right parties. Write for details and description. Used Car Dept., Randall-Dodd Auto Co., Salt Lake City

EXPERT KODAK Finishing

Have our professional photographers do your finishing—KODAK FILMS, 124 South Main Box 791. SHIPLERS Salt Lake City

HELP WANTED If you want big wages learn barber trade. Many small towns need barbers. Good opportunities open for men over draft age. Barbers in army have good as officers commission. Get prepared in few weeks. Call or write, Moler Barber College, 47 S. West Temple St., Salt Lake City

SANTA FE'S PROUD POSITION

Doesn't That One Must Go to New Mexico to Find the Real American Art.

The new museum of Santa Fe claims that "one must go to New Mexico to find an American architecture and an American art." The terraced houses of the Pueblos, the Franciscan missions, are ingenious, for they have been produced by the environment, the native building material, and the climate. In Santa Fe, through the efforts of the School of American Research, there has been fostered a renaissance of this ancient American architecture, one of the fairest results being the Museum building, or Temple of St. Francis and the Martyrs.

Six of the ancient Franciscan mission churches, 300 years old, are reproduced in the facade, without destroying the unity of its appearance; they are Acoma, San Felipe, Cochiti, Laguna, Santa Ana and Pecos. The outlines are hard, stiff plumb lines or levels. There are no exact repetitions or parallelisms, such as mark the California mission style. The massive doors of Santa Clara have been reproduced. There are cloisters and, of course, a patio. The new museum is an art gallery, part of the Museum of New Mexico, whose priceless archeological and historical collections are housed in the Palace of the Governors. Here are Taos and Santa Fe art colonies, numbering about 40 artists of international note.

WAS USED TO QUICK ACTION

Moving Picture Scenario Writer Accustomed to Taking Things "on the Fly," as it Were.

He had never seen her before, but he fell in love with her as she stepped from the surface car. "Come," he said, grabbing her by the arm. "We will take a taxi to the nearest clergyman and be married."

While waiting for the minister to put on a clean collar, wash his hands and otherwise prepare for the ceremony, the young man telephoned to the nearest furniture store. "Hello! Is this the general manager? Well, I want you to furnish a three-room apartment for me. There is one advertised in this morning's Planet, No. 42 West One Hundred and 'Steenth street. Yes, it is not very far from you. Have the furniture there in ten minutes, please."

Eleven minutes later a taxi raced through One Hundred and 'Steenth street, and the bride and groom entered their new home.

"Doesn't this seem—er—a little bit sudden to you?" asked the bride, as he sat down to get her breath.

"No, not exactly," replied the groom. "In fact, it seems the most natural thing in the world. You see, for the last five years I've done nothing but write moving-picture scenarios."—Film Fun.

Cheerful Guy.

Grump—I have absolutely nothing to be thankful for.

Guy—You can be thankful you're not dead, can't you?

Grump—What! And me carrying a big life insurance?—Boston Evening Transcript.

How to Feel Good Cheaply.

"I never throw away old junk, for that would make me feel wasteful."

"What do you do with it?"

"I give it away and feel charitable."—Boston Evening Transcript.

On a Commercial Basis.

Gerald gave his grandmother a little gift for her birthday, and she said: "Well, you are a good lad; I shall give you a nickel for yourself," to which the little chap replied, "But, grandma, the present cost 15 cents."

Unreasonable.

Several boys were holding a conference on the street corner. One boy kept correcting another's mistakes in English until the offender suddenly squared himself before his critic and demanded, "Gee whiz! what is vacation for if a feller has to talk proper all the time?"

Goldfish Dyed to Order.

Artificial coloring of goldfish by keeping them in water containing certain chemicals is extensively carried on in Sicily.